



HOBBIES/INTERESTS:

- Cooking nourishing meals for myself and others
- Long distance running
- Urban gardening

ART FORMS:

- Creative writing

YESENIA PEREZ

What drew you to arts education, and how do you practice the arts in your own life?

I believe in the power of the arts to transform education and, ultimately, drive social change.

Tell us about an impactful experience or association with the arts from your youth.

Growing up poor in Pomona, a city on the periphery of LA County, I did not have access to the museums and cultural institutions iconic to the region. Instead of attending the opening of the newest museum exhibition, I celebrated the overnight appearance of murals and graffiti around my neighborhood; rather than concert halls, I absorbed the sounds of my neighbors' banda music - the soundscapes of backyard parties lingering well past midnight. Playhouses and theaters were out of the question, but my grandma's kitchen table served as an intimate stage for the family to laugh, cry, and wonder over shared memories - stories of us that captivated my attention no matter how many times I had already heard them. I am surrounded by artists who constantly are creating spaces and experiences that challenge the presumed undesirability and disposability of communities like ours.

Is there anything you would tell your 15-year-old self with regard to the arts, if you had the opportunity to do so?

The arts need your creativity, perspective, and voice!

In your opinion, what are the biggest barriers to equitable arts education access in Los Angeles?

Public consciousness around arts education + the nonprofit industrial complex.